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II. — *Hephaestion and Irrationality*

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BEFORE the subject proper, indicated by the title of this paper, is taken up, some preliminary remarks seem desirable.

Since in recent years a change of views on the part of many concerning ancient meters has caused Hephaestion's *Manual* to be considered much more important than it was formerly considered, it seems desirable to learn as much as possible about his theories, and especially about the extent of his knowledge and the soundness of his judgment. On this subject there is an able article by Professor C. W. E. Miller in the *Transactions* of this Association, xxxiv, 49-59, entitled "Hephaestion and the Anapaest in the Aristophanic Trimeter." The author quotes the familiar passage, Westphal, p. 21: τῷ δὲ δακτύλῳ τῷ κατὰ τὰς περιττὰς ἐμπίπτουσι χώρας ἥκιστα οἱ ἱαμβοποιοὶ ἐχρήσαντο ποιηταί, σπανίως δὲ καὶ οἱ τραγικοί, οἱ δὲ κωμικοὶ συνεχῶς, ὥσπερ καὶ ἐν τῷ ἱαμβικῷ τῷ ἐπὶ τῆς ἀρτίου ἀναπαίστῳ· ἐκάτερον γὰρ ἄλογον· οὔτε γὰρ ἐν τῷ ἱαμβικῷ ἐχρῆν ἀνάπαιστον ἐπὶ τῆς ἀρτίου χώρας, ἐφ' ἧς οὐδὲ σπονδαίος ἐγγωρεῖ, οὐ λύσις ἐστὶν ὁ ἀνάπαιστος, οὔτε ἐν τῷ τροχαϊκῷ ἐπὶ τῆς περιττῆς τὸν δάκτυλον, ἐφ' ἧς οὐδὲ σπονδαίος ἐγγωρεῖ, οὐ ὁμοίως λύσις ὁ δάκτυλος.

This he translates: "As for the dactyl in the odd places (in trochaic verse), the iambic poets almost completely refrained from its use, and the tragedians but rarely employed it, though the comedians constantly used it, as they did also the anapaest in the even places of iambic verse; for either use is irrational; for neither ought the anapaest to be employed in the even places of iambic verse, since also the spondee, of which the anapaest is the resolution, is excluded from these positions, nor should the dactyl be used in the odd places of trochaic verse, inasmuch as also the spondee, of which the dactyl is in like manner the resolution, is excluded from these feet." He then proceeds to show that the views

expressed in this passage are erroneous, citing several modern scholars who likewise condemn them, but fail to get at the root of the matter. Professor Miller states his views as follows: "Now the great frequency of the irrational spondee occasioned by the irrational long, the dipodic structure of most iambic and trochaic verse, the regular diaeresis between the cola of the trochaic tetrameter, and the predominance of the penthemimeral caesura in the iambic trimeter, — all conspired to produce a tendency to a kind of catalectic effect at the end of the dipodies. If this reasoning be correct, the dactyl, which has the very opposite of a catalectic effect, would be ill adapted for the second part of the dipody, and hence, wherever used in large numbers, as in the Aristophanic trimeter, would be found more frequently in the odd feet than in the even" (with anacrusis), "or, speaking in the terms of the ordinary scansion, the anapaest would occur more frequently in the even places than in the odd." He then shows from statistics prepared by Rumpel (*Philologus*, xxviii, 599–627) that this is exactly what occurs. The preponderance of the resolved feet in the places from which Hephaestion would exclude them is great and is found also in the Middle and the New Comedy. Scholars interested in this subject should read the entire paper of Professor Miller.

This paper was presented in 1903. In 1892 I read a paper "On the Equivalence of Rhythmical Bars and Metrical Feet" (*Transactions*, xxiii, 157–177) in which I incidentally referred to the erroneous views of Hephaestion. I denied that the light anapaest and dactyl were resolved spondees and expressed my opinion as follows: "While the essence of rhythm is time, as indicated by marked units, still loudness adds something to the rhythmic effect. A spondee in dactyls makes the movement appear slow, although it takes the same time as a dactyl. This is because the voice reaches a fuller compass on a long syllable than on a short, so that two shorts, though equal in length to one long, represent less sound. They are, so to speak, as long but not as broad. Hence it is clear that a choreic dactyl resembles a trochee more than does the irrational choree. So, *mutatis mutandis*,

in the ascending rhythm. *This fact was overlooked by Hephaestion when he pronounced the anapaests in even places ἄλογοι, i.e. 'unreasonable,' not 'irrational.'*"

The last statement in this quotation brings us to the main object of this article, — to produce convincing evidence that Hephaestion nowhere mentions metrical irrationality or gives any reason to believe that he recognized it. If this is true, then he was either ignorant of Aristoxenus (not to mention other intelligent authors) or else saw fit to ignore his doctrine of the *χορείος ἄλογος*. Careful repeated perusals of the *Enchiridion* have failed to discover a trace of any conception or recognition of irrationality, unless it is in the passage under discussion. It might be claimed that in the unabridged work it may have been discussed; but it seems incredible that such a discussion would have been totally suppressed in the epitome.

In my paper, cited above, it is erroneously stated that Hephaestion called the feet under discussion ἄλογοι. (I quoted from memory.) He uses the neuter: *ἐκάτερον γὰρ ἄλογον*. Professor Miller renders ἄλογον 'irrational' and in a foot-note to the published paper says that in the discussion that followed the reading of the paper, it was suggested that the word meant 'contrary to reason,' 'unreasonable'; but he adheres to his interpretation and cites the translation made by Thomas F. Barham (1843), who renders the word 'alogous' and adds in a foot-note "that is, not according to just reckoning, or proportion." I do not know of any authority to cite in support of the view that the meaning is 'unreasonable' or 'illogical,' — not even the person that made the suggestion just mentioned; for that was myself. The suggestion was based on the fact that the neuter was used and not *ἐκάτερος γὰρ ἄλογος*. It will not, I hope, be regarded as an adverse criticism of Professor Miller's valuable paper, if an attempt is now made to *prove* that the word here means 'unreasonable,' 'illogical.' The question is one with which his paper was not concerned and which was raised only incidentally.

First let us consider the relation of the clause *ἐκάτερον γὰρ ἄλογον* to what precedes it. If ἄλογον means 'illogical,' it

must be conceded that in the author's opinion a comedian had a better right, or was more likely, to do an illogical thing than a tragedian. (According to the spurious passage [W. p. 19] this very use of the anapaest is inconsistent, but occurs *παρὰ κωμικοῖς, οὐ λίαν ἀντιποιουμένοις συμμετρίας*. This passage was made up from the one which we are discussing, but its author seems to have been too ignorant to deserve serious consideration.) On the other hand, if *ἄλογον* means 'irrational,' the author assumes that the reader has been made familiar with irrationality and been told that in comedy the irrational foot may be used where it cannot be used in tragedy; in other words, he assumes that the reader has already been told the very thing that he is now being told. This is clearly the worse horn of the dilemma and is rendered almost impossible by the fact that the neuter *ἐκάτερον* is used. This can refer grammatically to the usage only and not to the feet, which would require *ἐκάτερος*. In rendering we introduce a noun, 'use' or some equivalent, which makes it seem possible for *ἄλογον* to mean 'irrational' in the metrical sense, but in the Greek no such noun is expressed or understood. Without raising the question whether it would be correct Greek thus to use *ἄλογον* in its metrical sense, it can be safely maintained that it would not be so used except in speaking of something assumed to be perfectly familiar to those for whom the author is writing, and such an assumption here would be wholly unwarranted. There can scarcely be a doubt, then, that *ἐκάτερος γὰρ ἄλογος* would have been written if the metrical sense had been meant.

Now let us consider what follows the clause *ἐκάτερον γὰρ ἄλογον*. It may be noted that in *οὐδὲ σπονδαίος ἐγχωρεῖ* it makes no material difference whether we render *οὐδέ* 'not even' or 'also . . . not.' The latter is no doubt correct but it is difficult to translate it literally and at the same time clearly. Professor Miller avoids 'not' by introducing the negative word 'excluded'; but this still leaves 'also' obscure. The sense is perfectly clear, and the passage beginning with *οὔτε γὰρ* may be rendered freely: "for neither ought we in iambic verse to employ the anapaest in the even places, in

which we do not employ also the spondee, of which the anapaest is the resolution, nor should we in trochaic verse employ the dactyl in the odd places, in which we do not employ also the spondee, of which in like manner the dactyl is the resolution." Now this statement, as is shown by γάρ, gives the reason why the use of the anapaest and dactyl is ἄλογον. It is as if he had said simply: "Each usage is ἄλογον because it involves an inconsistency." A little reflection will convince any one, it is hoped, that, even if we rendered ἄλογον 'irrational,' it could not be understood in the metrical sense. The only escape from this conclusion would be to construe ἐκάτερον γὰρ ἄλογον parenthetically and refer οὔτε γὰρ κ.τ.έ. to what precedes ἐκάτερον, but a glance will reveal the impossibility of such reference.

It should be noted that the conclusion drawn from the clause beginning with οὔτε γάρ is entirely independent of any conclusion we may draw from the use of the neuter ἐκάτερον. It would have sufficed to show that ἄλογον'μαι mean 'illogical' there. The words following ἄλογον show that this *must* be its meaning.

The only excuse that can be offered for so long an article to prove the incompetence of Hephaestion is the fact that the more incompetent he was, the more important is it to prove him so, now that great importance is attached to his statements.